

CLARKSVILLE CHRONICLE.

VOLUME 9.

CLARKSVILLE, TENN., FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 1858.

NUMBER 8.

THE CHRONICLE.

Printed Weekly on a double-medium sheet every Friday morning, by

NEBLETT & GRANT,
Publishers and Proprietors.

TERMS OF THE PAPER,
\$2 Per annum, in advance.

TERMS OF ADVERTISING.
FOR ONE SQUARE OF TWELVE LINES OR LESS,
One insertion \$1.00 Two months \$4.50
Two insertions 1.50 Three months 5.00
Three insertions 2.00 Six months 9.00
One month 2.50 Twelve months 15.00

MISCELLANY.

SOMETHING ADVANTAGEOUS;
OR, A FAMILY FRACAS.

I once attended a very poor old man of the name of Jordan, in his last illness. I call him poor, but yet he was not in want, and had about him the comforts of life. When he was near his end, he said to me—

"Doctor, I want to know the truth from you. I am not in the habit of being flattered by the world. There was a time, indeed, when it 'foiled me to the top of my bent'; but that was long ago. Do you not flatter me, but tell me your real opinion. Shall I soon die, or shall I linger on a brief career, in a world I am quite willing to be done with?"

"You desire, me," replied I, "to be candid with you, and I will. You are on your death bed."

"How soon shall I be immortal?"

"That I cannot say. But your hours, so far as human experience can teach me to predict, are numbered."

He was silent for a few moments, and a slight spasm passed across his face.

"Well," he said, "it is the lot of all. I have lived long enough."

"Is there no friend or relation, Mr. Jordan," said I, "to whom you would wish to send?"

"You are here, as you have often told me, quite alone in lodgings. Perhaps you would like to revive some old recollections before you leave the world."

"Not one," he said.

"Are you so completely isolated?"

"Most completely. I have tried all relations, and found them wanting. But still I have remembered them, and made my will. It is now between the mattress and sacking of this bed, and Mr. Shaw, the only honest attorney I ever met with, and who resides in Lincoln's Inn Fields, will carry my intentions into effect. I was rich once in early life. How dark a day."

"What day?"

"To-day. How dark and misty it has come over, doctor."

His sight was going fast, and I felt certain that it would require but little patience, and a great sacrifice of time to see the last of Mr. Jordan.

"Yes," he continued, speaking in an odd, spasmodic fashion. "Yes, I was rich; and had many a crawling sycophant about me, many smiling faces at my board; but there came a reverse, and like fair flowers at a sudden frost, my kind friends hid their heads. I was nearly destitute, and thinking and believing that the tie of blood would be strong enough to bind me to me, in my distress, those with whom I claimed kindred, and who had been delighted to claim kindred with me, I went to them a visitor."

"And failed."

"And failed, as you say. They dropped from me one by one. Some remembered slight offenses; some were never at home; some really thought I must have been dreadfully improvident, and until they were convinced I had not, they could not assist me. Doors were shut in my face—window blinds were pulled down as I passed. I was shunned as a pestilence—my clothes were in rags—my step feeble from long want of common necessities. And then an old school companion died in the West Indies, and left me £20,000, which I received through the hands of Mr. Shaw."

"A large fortune! And your relations?"

"Heard of it, and were frantic. I disappeared from them all. From that day to this, they have not heard of me. Do you love wild flowers?"

"Yes. Here are heaps just from the morning garden. Look, too, how you cherish twines them in her hair. The stream flows deep to eternity!"

"Mr. Jordan, sir," I cried. "Mr. Jordan, do you know me?"

"Come hither, laughing, gentle spirit," he said, "bring with you your heap of daisy buds. Yes, I know this is the sweet violet. Mary, my Mary; God knows I love you."

It was a strange thing, but, at the moment, the blind of the window, which I had drawn up to the top, came suddenly rattling down, and the room was quite dark. I raised it again, and then turned to the bed—Mr. Jordan was a corpse! What a remarkable change had in these few

moments come over the old man's face.—The sharp lines of age had all disappeared, and there was a calm, benign expression upon the still features, such as in life I never saw them wear.

"A restless spirit is at peace," I said, as I felt for the will where he told me it was placed, and found it. It was merely tied up with a piece of red tape, and addressed to Mr. Shaw, 20, Lincoln's Inn Fields; so I resolved to trust no other messenger, but to take it in my hand myself. I told the landlady of the house that her lodger was no more; and that she would no doubt hear immediately from his solicitor, and then I left.

"Well, Mr. Shaw," I said, after I had mentioned to him the manner of Mr. Jordan's death, "here is the will, sir, and I presume I have nothing further to do than to thank you for your courtesy, and bid you good evening."

"Stay a moment," he said. "Let me look at the document. Humph! a strange will. He leaves the form of an advertisement here, which is to be inserted in the morning papers, calling his relations together, to hear the will read."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. Well, I shall, as I see I am named trustee, do as he wishes. He states that he is very poor."

"Why, he spoke to me of £20,000."

"Did he really? A delusion, sir, quite a delusion. £20,000! He had that amount twenty-five years ago. But, sir, as you have attended him, and as I happen to know he had a high opinion of you, I should like you, as his friend, to be with me, as it were, in future proceedings connected with his will!"

"In which there is a mystery, eh! Mr. Shaw?"

"A little—perhaps a little bit of post mortem revenge, that is all, which I am not now at liberty to decant upon. But I will take care to coincide with you, and I shall hope that you will follow the old fellow to the grave."

I promised that much, and duly attended the funeral. It was a quiet, walking affair, and from the manner of it I felt quite convinced that there were not funds to make it otherwise. A mound of earth alone marked the spot in the little churchyard at Barnes, where Mr. Jordan slept the sleep that knows no waking. A drizzling rain came down. The air was cold and eager, and I returned home from the funeral of Mr. Jordan, about as uncomfortable as I could.

The next day the following advertisement appeared in a morning paper, and caught my eye as I sat at breakfast:

"If any of the relations of Mr. John James Jordan, deceased, will call at the office of Mr. Shaw, 20, Lincoln's Inn Fields, they will hear of something advantageous."

I made up my mind to call upon Mr. Shaw during the day, and about three o'clock, I reached his chambers, or rather I reached the stair-case leading to them, and there I had to stop, for it was quite besieged by men and women, who were all conversing with great eagerness.

"What can it mean?" said an old woman; "I'm his aunt, and of course I speak for my Ned!"

"Well, but bother your Ned," said a man, "he hardly really belongs to the family, I'm his brother. Think of that, Mrs. Dean." "Think of what, you two-legged goose?" "Pho, pho," said another man, "I knew him well. I'm his cousin. Hillo! what's this?" Who are you?"

A woman in tattered garments, but who still looked like a beautiful one, stood hesitatingly at the foot of the stairs. "Is this Mr. Shaw's?" she said. "Hush, Mary, hush! don't my dear." "But I am hungry, mamma," said the little girl, who was holding her by a handkerchief of her dress.

"Oh, Mary—do not dear; we—we shall soon go home. Hush, dear, hush, hush! Is this Mr. Shaw's?"

"Yes," said a fat woman, "and who is you, pray?"

"I—I saw an advertisement. I am his aunt Grace's only child. My name is Mary Grantham. This is my only child. She—she is fatherless and has been so for many a day."

"What," cried a man, "are you the Mary he broke his heart about?"

"Broke his fiddlestick!" said the fat woman. "Good God, do I live to hear that!" exclaimed the woman with the child.

"You had better go up to the solicitor at once," whispered I. "Come, I will show you his door."

I made a way for her through the throng of persons, and we soon reached the chamber. "Here is another of Mr. Jordan's relations," Mr. Shaw said, "I find you have had quite a levee."

"I have indeed, doctor. You must come at twelve o'clock next Monday, madam, when the will of Mr. Jordan will be read to all around."

"I thank you, sir," she said about to leave the chamber, when I interposed.

"Pardon me, madam," I said. "But as I was the only person with Mr. Jordan at the time of his decease, I wish to ask you a question. If I mistake not, your name was the last that passed his lips. 'Mary, my Mary,' he said, 'God knows that I loved you!'"

She sank into a chair, and burst into tears. "You, then," I added, "are the Mary whom he loved. Ah, why did you not, if you can weep for him now, reciprocate the passion?"

"I did love him," she cried; "God knows, and he, who is now with his God, knows how I loved him. But evil tongues came between us, and we were separated. He was malign to me, and I was wearied by entreaties and tears, until I married another. She, who has turned me from him, and severed two that would and should have been all the world to each other, confessed the sin upon her death-bed."

"Who was it?" said Mr. Shaw.

"His mother! From no other source could I have believed the tales I was told. But I did not then know enough of the world to think that there were mothers who could malign their own children.—We were separated—my husband died, leaving me that last little one, of many. We are very, very poor—no one will help us—an acquaintance showed me the advertisement, and urged me to come—it was a false hope. But I find that there are strong arms and brawling tongues below, that I cannot contend against."

"Never mind that," said the solicitor; "it is my duty to read the will on Monday, and as a relation it is your duty to attend at the same time. I tell you to have no expectations."

I saw Mr. Shaw try to slip some money into her hand, and I saw a crimson flush come over her face as she said, "We can still work;" and then, fearing she had been harsh to one who wished to be kind, she shook his hand in both of hers, and said, "God bless you, sir, I thank you from my heart."

Bang, bang, came to the door of the chamber, a minute after Mary had left, and upon its being opened, a man of about six and thirty made his appearance.

"Something advantageous!" he gasped, for he was out of breath; "what—what is it? Give it me, give it me! How much? Good God, don't let anybody else have it. I'm his youngest brother—give it to me."

"If you will attend here at 12 o'clock on Monday the will will be read."

Bang, bang, bang!

"I'm thoroughly besieged," said Mr. Shaw; "now, madam, who are you?"

"Something advantageous," screamed a masculine looking woman; "I'm a relative—what is it? Come on, my dear.—Here's my five dear daughters, and my baby—come along."

"Be off with you," cried the younger brother.

"Did you speak to me, you wretch," said the lady, and she planted a blow in his face that made him reel again. "Take that; I know you are a sneaking hound; you used to be called the chimpanzee in the family, you poor, scorch-up looking bundle of cat's-meat."

Several more arrivals took place, and poor Mr. Shaw was fairly bewildered.—Sounds of contention arose on the staircase, shrieks from family combatants came upon our ears, and finally, I advised Mr. Shaw to paste a placard on the outer door of his office, on which was written:

"The will of Mr. Jordan will be read here on Monday next, at 12 o'clock precisely."

The riot gradually subsided. The evening came on, and all the relations of the deceased had been and gone. Mr. Shaw and I supped together, and I promised to be with him punctually at twelve o'clock on Monday, for I was as curious as anybody could be to hear the will read, and, at all events, anticipated a bustling scene upon the occasion. I was not doomed to disappointment.

It is a habit of mine rather to be too soon than too late, and in the present instance I found it a most useful one, for I really almost doubt if I should have got into the chambers of Mr. Shaw at all if I had been later than I was.

I had fairly to push Mrs. Grantham in, despite a vigorous opposition; and a man stopped my own entrance, crying—

"Who are you? What relation are you?"

"His grandfather's uncle," said I; "and if you don't make way I'll pull the nose off your face!"

It was well that Mr. Shaw occupied very spacious chambers, or otherwise he could not have accommodated one-half of the persons who came to the reading of the will; and never in all my life did I see such malignant looks pass from one to another, as shot from the eyes of the relations.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Mr. Shaw; "ahem! ahem!"

There was a death-like stillness.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am commissioned to read to you the—what shall I call it?—it is hardly a will—of the late Mr. Jordan. No, it certainly ought not to be called a will, for a will, properly speaking, is a testamentary—"

"Read, read, read!" cried a dozen voices.

"Well, ladies and gentlemen, I am glad to see you are all in respectable mourning."

"Except one," said the younger brother; "there's his Mary, that he was so fond of. Oh, dear me! she only comes for what she can get."

Mrs. Grantham burst into tears. There was a little shabby piece of black crape upon her arm, and another upon the arm of her child.

"I—I could not," she said; "I could not do more. God help me! I had not the means!"

"Read, read, read!" cried all the voices.

"Ahem!" said Mr. Shaw, reading; "I, John James Jordan, being very poor, and having in vain called upon every relation I have in the world for assistance, and found none, have to state that my heart was filled with bitterness and uncharitableness towards them. But still I think that they are not dead to all feeling; and this being my last will and testament, I desire that my debts, amounting to the sum of one pound three shillings and eight pence, be paid forthwith off my estate; that my funeral be strictly private, in Barnes churchyard, where I last parted with one whom I loved, but who has gone abroad. I am told; and to that one of my relations who will erect a tombstone, I bequeath—"

"Hark! will you!" cried one; "be quiet. Go on—yes, yes. Oh! you wretch, where's your feelings. Go to the devil!"

"Really, ladies and gentlemen," said I, "this is most indecorous."

"I bequeath," continued Mr. Shaw, "my dying blessing and forgiveness."

Mr. Shaw then folded up the will and put it into his pocket, saying—

"I wish you all good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I sold the few clothes and other matters he died possessed of, and paid for the funeral and his debts; being myself minus one shilling and four pence, which I hope you will some of you pay."

It is quite impossible by any words to fairly depict to the reader the appearance of Mr. Jordan's relations at this moment. If the fabled Gorgon's head had suddenly appeared, and transformed them all to stone, they could not have looked more completely paralyzed and panic-stricken.

"A tombstone!" shrieked twenty voices.

"A tombstone!" said Mr. Shaw. "A small one would not cost much. You could put on it a suitable inscription.—Here lies—"

"Lies here—never mind," said the brother. "Never mind. I—I—Oh, that's all, is it."

"You are a humbug," said the masculine woman to Mr. Shaw, "and so was old stupid Jordan."

"Go to the deuce, all of you," shouted another; "a tombstone indeed!"

Mr. Shaw was wiping his spectacles.

"Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to add—"

"Oh, stuff, stuff! Bother! A tombstone indeed! I shan't stay another moment. An old thief. I wish a tombstone had been down his throat. Come on! Come on! It's all a do."

"But, ladies and gentlemen—"

They were quite deaf to the remonstrances of Mr. Shaw, and in a few moments the chambers were quiet clear, with the exception of Mrs. Mary Grantham, who was sobbing bitterly. She then rose, and looked at me hesitatingly. Then she looked at Mr. Shaw, and she seemed to be struggling to say something. She placed her hand in her bosom, and drew forth a ring tied to a black ribbon, and then, with a convulsive effort she spoke.

"This—this ring—it is my only valuable possession. It was given to me thirty years ago, by him who is now no more, my cousin John, who loved me. I have clung to it in pain and in sorrow, in difficulty and in distress; I have never parted with it. It seemed to be but only separated from him while I had it near my heart. But now, great distress forces me—to—to part with it. Will—will neither of you gentlemen buy it of me: I—I shrink from its going into the hands of utter strangers."

"Humph!" said Mr. Shaw; "there are a couple of sovereigns for it."

She took the money, and then, after one long lingering look, and a fervent kiss at the ring, she laid it on the table, and tottered from the place. I was about to follow her, but Mr. Shaw held me back.

"Hold! hold!" he said.

"You're a brute, sir," said I. "Take your hands off of me; I will buy the ring

of you and give it back to her. It breaks her heart to part with it, I see."

"I shan't part with it," he said; "you are a very hasty man, doctor."

I was very angry, and bounced out of the office. I looked eagerly about for Mrs. Grantham, but could not see her. I walked hurriedly across the square, and as chance have it, I went in the same direction she did. My first impulse was to speak to her, and my second thought was to follow her, and to see where she went.

She crossed Holborn, and traversed some of the long streets that lead into the New Road, she arrived at last, and finally paused at a stone-mason's yard.

I could have shed tears at that moment, for now I felt why she had parted with her cherished ring. She stayed about a quarter of an hour at the stone-mason's, and then she came out and walked slowly away. I did not follow her further, but I went into the mason's yard, and said to him—

"Did that lay give you an order?"

"Why, yes, such an one as it is. She has got me to do a stone for two pounds, and she's paid me. I'm to meet her at the church-yard at Barnes, to-morrow morning at nine o'clock with it, and put it up. It's only to have on it the name of John James Jordan, and under that, 'God bless him.'"

I walked away with a sort of mist before my eyes, and it was an hour before I recovered my composure. "I will meet her," thought I, "at the grave of her last love, and I will be a friend to her, if she never have another in the world. She shall have her ring again, if I force it from the lawyer. She shall have it. I'll go and get it now, at once."

I suppose I looked in a very tolerable passion when I got back to Mr. Shaw's chambers, for he got behind a table when he saw me, and said—"Come, come, no violence."

"Hark you, sir," said I; "you have got the ring. There's your money. Give it me directly, sir. Mrs. Grantham, poor thing, is going to-morrow morning at nine o'clock, to place a stone at the grave of Mr. Jordan, and I intend to be there and give her her ring."

"Oh! very well. Bother the ring. I don't want it. It ain't worth half the money I gave for it. There it is; don't bother me."

I took up the ring, and put down two sovereigns, and casting upon him a withering look, which to tell the truth, he did not seem to care much about, I left the chambers.

A soft, damp, white mist covered up all objects, and made the air uncommonly raw and chilly, as on the following morning, just as the clock of the church at Barnes chimed the three-quarters past eight, I entered the churchyard.

The first thing I then did, was to fall over somebody's grave, for I was looking for Mrs. Grantham, instead of minding where I was walking; and then a voice said—

"There you go again, as violent as usual, doctor;" and in the dim mist I saw Mr. Shaw, the solicitor, to my great surprise.

I was going to say something, but at the moment I was nearly knocked down again, by some one brushing past me. A gleam of sunshine came out, and the mist began to clear away, when a most singular scene presented itself. A few yards off was the grave of Mr. Jordan, and kneeling by it was Mary, his first love, with her child by her side. Mr. Shaw stood to my left, and at his feet knelt a respectable looking young man—I recollected him as Mr. Shaw's clerk.

"Good God! Richards," said Mr. Shaw, "is that you? What is the matter?"

"Oh! sir," said Richards, "I have come to ask your forgiveness! The spirit of my poor old father stood by my bedside all night. Oh, God! oh, God! it was dreadful; and I knew what it was for—Oh! sir, forgive me. I—I peeped into the will, sir, while you were out to dinner—Mr. Jordan's will—and—and I went round to all the relations, and sold the secret for two pounds a-piece, and—and—"

Mr. Shaw gave a jump that astonished me.

"Doctor, doctor," he shouted; "for God's sake run down the London road, and bring the man with the gravestone. Oh! good gracious. Oh!—m—y, Richards. Ha! ha! ha! Oh! here he is. Oh! bless you for a prudent stone-mason; you shall get well paid for this job. Hip! hip! hip!—hurrah!"

I thought, to be sure, that Mr. Shaw must have gone mad. There was a man looking over the railing of the churchyard with a spade on his shoulder, to him Mr. Shaw said—

"Five guineas for that spade."

The man thought he was mad, and tried to run away; but he dropped the spade; and in another moment Mr. Shaw's coat was off, and he was digging away furiously.

"Where's the stone?" he cried, "bring it you and give it back to her. It breaks her heart to part with it, I see."

"I shan't part with it," he said; "you are a very hasty man, doctor."

I was very angry, and bounced out of the office. I looked eagerly about for Mrs. Grantham, but could not see her. I walked hurriedly across the square, and as chance have it, I went in the same direction she did. My first impulse was to speak to her, and my second thought was to follow her, and to see where she went.

She crossed Holborn, and traversed some of the long streets that lead into the New Road, she arrived at last, and finally paused at a stone-mason's yard.

I could have shed tears at that moment, for now I felt why she had parted with her cherished ring. She stayed about a quarter of an hour at the stone-mason's, and then she came out and walked slowly away. I did not follow her further, but I went into the mason's yard, and said to him—

"Did that lay give you an order?"

"Why, yes, such an one as it is. She has got me to do a stone for two pounds, and she's paid me. I'm to meet her at the church-yard at Barnes, to-morrow morning at nine o'clock with it, and put it up. It's only to have on it the name of John James Jordan, and under that, 'God bless him.'"

I walked away with a sort of mist before my eyes, and it was an hour before I recovered my composure. "I will meet her," thought I, "at the grave of her last love, and I will be a friend to her, if she never have another in the world. She shall have her ring again, if I force it from the lawyer. She shall have it. I'll go and get it now, at once."

I suppose I looked in a very tolerable passion when I got back to Mr. Shaw's chambers, for he got behind a table when he saw me, and said—"Come, come, no violence."

"Hark you, sir," said I; "you have got the ring. There's your money. Give it me directly, sir. Mrs. Grantham, poor thing, is going to-morrow morning at nine o'clock, to place a stone at the grave of Mr. Jordan, and I intend to be there and give her her ring."

the stone. That's right. Poke it in—prop it up. That's the thing—all right.

"Lor!" said the stone-mason, as he lifted up his hands, "look there!"

I looked in the direction he indicated, and there, to my astonishment, I saw arriving, carts, coaches, cabs, and wheelbarrows, and each containing a tombstone. A regular fight ensued at the entrance of the church-yard; and engaged in the fight I recognized the relations of Mr. Jordan. Heavens, how they cuffed each other!

"Hold!" cried Mr. Shaw; "you are all too late, although you had information you ought not to have had. There is already a stone on Mr. Jordan, and placed, too, by the only one who knew not what you all know. Listen to the conclusion of the will—'And to that one of my relations who will erect a tombstone to my memory, I bequeath my blessing and forgiveness, and eighty thousand pounds in bank stock.' 'Madam,' to Mrs. Grantham, 'I congratulate you.'"

"And there's your ring," said I; "Mr. Shaw, let us shake hands; I understand you now."

"Ha! ha!" said Mr. Shaw. "Ladies and gentlemen, you had better all of you keep the tombstones for yourselves. You can get the name altered, for if you don't I am very much afraid you will not find them SOMETHING ADVANTAGEOUS."

CHILDREN.—Christ, in blessing the little ones of Judea, blessed all children; and meant that we should reverence them as the hope of the world. How, when life grows dark before us—When its woes oppress and its crime appals, we turn instinctively to little children, with their brave, sunny faces of faith and good cheer—their eyes of unclouded prophecy, and drink from the full fountain of their fresh young natures, courage and comfort, and deep draughts of divine love and constancy. How a child's pure kiss drops the very honey of heaven into the heart soured by worldly misfortune—how a child's sweet smile falls like oil on the waters of thoughts, vexed by worldly care, and smooths them into peace!—Grace Greenwood.

SHOW ME A DEMOCRAT AND I WILL SHOW YOU A LIAR.—The Knickerbocker tells the following 'good one':

"A tall, green sort of a well dressed fellow walked into a Broadway saloon the other day, where they were talking politics on a high key, and stretching himself up to his full height, exclaimed, 'Where are the Democrats? Show me a democrat, gentlemen, and I'll show you a liar!'"

In an instant a man stood before the noisy inquirer, in a warlike attitude, and exclaimed: "I am a democrat, sir!" "You are?" Well, just step around the corner with me and I'll show you a fellow who said I couldn't find a Democrat in the ward! Ain't he a liar, I should like to know."

THE TAX OF LETTER WRITING